

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 01664 021822Z

43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8647

INFO AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK IMMEDIATE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

COMICEDEFOR

CINCLANT

CNO

SECDEF

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 01664

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: EFIS, PFOR, MARR, IC, UK, US, NATO

SUBJECT: UK/ICELAND FISHERIES DISPUTE: STATUS REPORT

REFERENCE: LMNDON 1595

1. HEAD OF WESTERN EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT, FCO (DAVID GOODALL), TOLD EMBASSY OFFICER FEBRUARY 2 THAT, AFTER SEVERAL POSTPMNEMENTS, HMG NOW EXPECTS ICELANDIC DECISION ON BRITISH PROPOSALS FEBRUARY 3. GOODALL WAS PESSIMISTIC AS TO POSSIBILITY ICELAND WILL ACCEPT ALL PARTS OF PROPOSED SOLUTION BECAUSE OF INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION IN ICELAND.

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PAGE 02 LONDON 01664 021822Z

2. ASKED WHETHER BRITISH HAD PLANS READY IN EVENT OF ICELANDIC REJECTION OF PROPOSAL, GOODALL SAID A RANGE OF OPTIONS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED, BUT WHICH OPTION WAS IMPLEMENTED DEPENDED ON ICELANDIC RESPONSE. HE ADDED THAT ICELANDIC GOVERNMENT WAS OBVIOUSLY DIVIDED. THE "UNDERSTANDINE" ICELAND HAD GIVEN REGARDING NON-HARASSMENT OF BRITISH FISHING TRAWLERS HAD NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED BY ICELANDIC GOVERNMENT. BRITAIN DEPLORED THIS, THOUGH HMG UNDERSTOOD THE REALITIES OF THE ICELANDIC POLITICAL SITUATION. FISHING ACTIVITIES OF BRITISH TRAWLERS WERE BEING INTERRUPTED, AND GOODALL HINTED THAT ROYAL NAVY WOULD LIKELY BE RETURNED TO FISHING WATERS SINCE TRAWLERS WERE ABLE TO CATCH MORE FISH WITH PROTECTION THAN WITHOUT.

3. GOODALL SAID THAT BRITISH HAD GONE A LONG WAY TOWARD MEETING ICELANDIC DEMANDS, AND HE EXPRESSED SOME DISCOURAGEMENT THAT THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN ICELAND WAS SUCH THAT AGREEMENT SEEMED NO CLOSER. WHILE HMG WAS FULLY CONSCIOUS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF ICELAND TO NATO, THERE WAS A LIMIT TO HOW FAR BRITAIN COULD GO. MAYBE, HE QUERIED, IT WOULD BE BETTER TO LET THE ICELANDERS TRY TO SORT IT OUT INTERNALLY AND LIVE WITH THE CONSEQUENCES.

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